



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Public Affairs**

2001 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2001
Tel 919-733-9190 • Fax 919-733-7447

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor

Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

Renee McCoy, Public Affairs Director

For release: Immediate
Contact: Ed Bristol (919) 855-3569

Date: September 30, 2009

State Agency Helps Business Cut Costs With Pre-Screened Applicants

RALEIGH – Even with a recovering economy, hiring for new jobs usually comes last for businesses gearing up for better times. Typically, employers say they would rather pay overtime than add new staff. One of the reasons is the cost of recruiting, screening and training new employees.

But, according to its director, the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services can help businesses reduce those costs by hiring applicants who've received services from her agency.

"Depending on their need, we may have provided these folks with counseling, training, education, or other services to help get them ready to work," said Linda Harrington. "The result is we're able to match up our consumer's experience, skills and interest with a business's need. That saves the employer time and money."

Last year, her division assisted 6,119 North Carolinians with disabilities in finding jobs. Besides pre-screening, Harrington says there are other factors that give her agency's applicants an edge with prospective employers:

- Services "stay on the job." Agency professionals provide continuing, no-cost follow-up consultation to make sure the employee and job remain a good match.
- The agency actually compensates employers for providing their referral on-the-job-training. At training's end, the employer has the option to hire the trainee as a regular employee.
- There are tax incentives for hiring people with disabilities and for adapting the workplace to accommodate a new employee's specific disability. National data shows that often no accommodations are required in these situations. When required, accommodations can usually be met at minimal or no cost.

According to Harrington, vocational rehabilitation services are among the most cost-effective of any offered by government. She pointed to statistics from a nationwide study: for every vocational rehabilitation dollar spent, \$5 will be returned in taxes from subsequent employment of the consumer, and \$14 to \$18 will be returned to the local economy.

Moreover, says Harrington: "We serve every county in North Carolina so, for every employer, we have a local office not very far away."

October is "National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

For local office and other information: <http://dvr.dhhs.state.nc.us> or 1-800-689-9090

